

This pack presents accounts of 'work in progress' on a range of issues including quality enhancement, pedagogy, technology and institutional change. The papers included here have been prepared by the project teams supported under the Council's e-Learning Transformation Programme.

The programme was funded in response to the 2003 report of the Council's e-learning working group, which recommended that we 'should consider investing in collaborative, transformational e-learning developments from strategic funds.' The report recommended that developments should be driven by learning, not technology, and highlighted the importance of developing e-learning within a planned process of organisational development. This model of transformation contrasts with ongoing processes of incremental institutional change, and involves e-learning substituting for (and not simply enhancing) conventional delivery methods.

The business case for e-learning must be about achieving improvements in quality while delivering real efficiency gains for institutions. We wanted to support institutions that were prepared to undertake an accelerated process of strategic change using e-learning and record and evaluate the process and outcomes of their work. Our expectation was that successful projects would build upon mature support structures, an institutional desire to increase academic productivity, and a commitment to learner-centred provision. We felt that there would be most scope for productivity gains where institutions were prepared to use content developed externally (or collaboratively), where there was clear scope for substitution of capital or labour, where the required skills or training were in place, and where there were effective partnerships between academics and service departments.

In developing the model we noted the work of the Pew Grant programme (1999–2003), which provided funding for course re-design in North American universities, using technology to achieve quality enhancement and cost savings. The projects supported in this programme explored supplemental and replacement delivery models, learner-centred pedagogy, alternative staffing structures, and on-demand support. The focus of the programme was on courses rather than institutional development, and the policy context differs from that for Scottish higher education in some respects. US universities often have large cohorts of students using standard textbooks, while by comparison Scottish universities are smaller and more diverse academically. Nevertheless, the Pew Grant programme demonstrated evidence of savings and – in most cases – improvements in student learning. This was encouraging in a policy environment where relating impact to particular interventions is often seen as challenging or even impossible.

The six projects in the SFC transformation programme are using technology to transform a wide range of processes to enhance the experience of learners. They involve various levels of collaboration between Scotland's colleges and universities. Transformation is being pursued in a variety of institutional and subject contexts, and three of the projects specifically focused on supporting the transition from college to university. In this way the programme aims to provide deliverables and insights relating to different aspects of transformation. We expect it will make a significant contribution to the development of learning and teaching practice across the UK.

JISC is the leading UK body supporting the development of ICT in education and research. We asked JISC to manage the programme on our behalf. We wanted to ensure that the projects built upon previous work supported by JISC and to inform future JISC activities and development programmes.

Projects of this scale and complexity can be challenging enough; an additional complexity was that we were keen to see evidence of transformation at both the course and the institutional level. This included gathering baseline data, agreeing metrics and engaging in reflective analysis. We appointed Glenaffric Ltd to support these project-level evaluation activities and to evaluate the programme as a whole.

While the funded phase of the programme is now complete, we recognise that the projects represent the first phase of much longer processes of institutional strategic change, perhaps lasting up to four or five years. Some projects have already reported positive impacts on student learning, but in the main, the impact of this work on the learner experience and data on other efficiency gains will only be known in future years. So we look forward to hearing more about the progress and impact of these projects, through their websites and other dissemination channels.

This pack presents a series of short transformation 'stories', based around themes or sets of issues explored by the projects. More detailed information is available from the project websites, which can be found via these links:

[www.sfc.ac.uk/information/information\\_learning/transformational\\_change.html](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/information/information_learning/transformational_change.html)

[www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning\\_sfc.aspx](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning_sfc.aspx)

I hope you find this pack useful.

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